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1. TWO SOVIET PARTY SECRETARIES RELINQUISH
LOCAL POSTS

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Release of Yekaterina Furtseva and Alexei Kirichenko from their local party posts in Moscow and the Ukrainian Republic respectively, to free them for their duties in the central party secretariat, is not a demotion for either. It is a further indication of the increased responsibilities being assumed by the central party secretariat under First Secretary Khrushchev.

At an extraordinary 26 December plenary meeting of the Ukrainian central committee, attended by the visiting Khrushchev, Kirichenko was replaced as local first secretary by his former second in command, Nikolai Podgorny. Podgorny served during World War II as a USSR Deputy Commissar for the Food Industry and after 1950 as party first secretary in Kharkov Oblast. In June 1953 he became second secretary of the Ukrainian party organization and was elected to the all-union central committee at the 20th party congress in February 1956.

Furtseva's replacement in Moscow, 50-year-old Vladimir Ustinov, is a comparative unknown. He is apparently a mechanical engineer and World War II production chief who became increasingly active in party affairs in postwar years, and from 1950 until January 1954 was a district party chief in Moscow. In 1952 he was a delegate to the 19th party congress. Since then he may have attended the Higher Party School in Moscow where promising party executives are trained.

Ustinov was elevated to his present post over the heads of two prominent Moscow city party secretaries, Ivan Marchenko, a full member of the central committee, and Sergei Butusov, a candidate member of the central committee. His background as an engineer may have been a factor in his assignment to head the industrial Moscow area which, as a result of Khrushchev's industrial reorganization, constitutes a separate economic region.

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2. SOVIET PARTY SHAKE-UP IN KAZAKHSTAN

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Party presidium member Nikolai Belyayev has replaced Ivan Yakovlev as party boss in the central Asian republic of Kazakhstan. The shift, presumably decided upon at the party central committee plenum in Moscow

on 16-17 December, received pro forma approval at a Kazakh party meeting on 26 December.

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Belyayev has had many years' experience in the agricultural field and may have been assigned to the Kazakh post to help boost production in the Kazakh part of the new lands area. He has presumably been relieved as central party secretary (in charge of agriculture)--a post he held since July 1955--and as deputy chairman of the central committee's "Buro for the RSFSR"--to which he was assigned in February 1956.

during the debate on Zhukov in the October central committee plenum, a group of extremists led by Belyayev took a position contrary to that of Khrushchev and wanted to extend the purge to all party and government officials guilty of the "cult of personality." Belyayev was considered a rising star, and in his view would be Khrushchev's eventual successor. Belyayev has been retained on the party presidium, but he has lost a direct voice in Moscow affairs and may have suffered a decline in political stature.

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In addition to Yakolev, the Kazakh party's second secretary, Nikolai Zhurin, was fired. No reason was given for the changes, but the absence from the announcement of the usual phrase, "in connection with his transfer to other work," suggests that both Yakovlev, a full member of the central committee, and Zhurin, a candidate member of the central committee, were dropped in disfavor.

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4. THAI LEADER FACING PROLONGED PERIOD OF INCAPACITATION

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Marshal Sarit, the leader of Thailand's ruling military group, suffered a severe internal hemorrhage on 24 December and his doctors state he must have a major operation. Sarit's aide approached the American Embassy on 26 December for assistance in arranging medical treatment in the United States.

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Sarit's incapacitation comes at a time when the military group and associated civilian politicians are heavily engaged in organizing a new government in the wake of the 15 December parliamentary elections. During his absence from the scene, Premier-designate Thanom, who ranks just below Sarit in the military group hierarchy, will probably be Thailand's principal leader. Thanom may have greater difficulty than his chief, however, in keeping the more ambitious of his colleagues within the military group in line.

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5. AFRO-ASIAN SOLIDARITY CONFERENCE OPENS
IN CAIRO

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The Communist-inspired Afro-Asian Solidarity Conference, which opened in Cairo on 26 December, has adopted a nine-point agenda embracing the subjects of imperialism, colonialism, economic cooperation, and the Algerian war. Anwar al-Sadat, chairman of the conference and one of Nasir's close advisers, maintained a moderate tone in

his opening speech, cautioning the members to avoid extremism in reaching solutions to Afro-Asian problems.

Although the conference acknowledged a message of greeting from Mao Tse-tung, it received no message from Premier Bulganin--giving some weight to an earlier report that Nasir had discouraged such a message when it was proposed by the Soviet ambassador to Egypt. However, a political coloration was given the Soviet delegation by the appointment of Sh. R. Rashidov, chairman of the Presidium of the Uzbek Supreme Soviet, as head of the delegation.

The Egyptian delegation will reportedly recommend to the conference formation of an Afro-Asian Chamber of Commerce, a Workers' Federation, and a common market. Ambassador Hare believes that the European Common Market, which is intended to include African territories, has become increasingly an overt target in pre-conference propaganda. Egyptian and Chinese Communist labor leaders have from time to time reiterated the need for a regional trade union organization.

Both Soviet and left-wing Egyptian newspapers have called the conference "an extension of the Bandung Conference" in an apparent attempt to blur its nongovernmental nature and thus increase its propaganda impact. Izvestia characterized the conference as "one of the year's most remarkable and significant events."

6. BRUSSELS COOL TOWARD EARLY ACCEPTANCE OF MISSILE BASES



Strong opposition to missile bases among all three major Belgian political parties has evidently convinced the coalition government that it would

be unwise at this time to volunteer for early acceptance of NATO IRBM's. While a high defense official remains hopeful that Belgium--if pressed--would eventually follow the Dutch example in accepting missiles, Foreign Minister Larock has promised that no decision will be taken without parliamentary consultation. The American Embassy is inclined to believe it will be easier for the government to face up to its NATO responsibilities after the present "excitement" has subsided.

The government will try to avoid the missile base issue prior to the national elections to be held next spring. The Social Christian party campaign for a reduction in the military conscription term also prevents the government--which is operating under a strict defense budget ceiling--from supporting a larger defense commitment. Within the governing coalition, there are several prominent "neutralists" who, while not very influential within their parties, are a factor in shaping Belgian public opinion. There has been some public agitation that a country with Belgium's population density should not accept missile bases.

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7. BRITISH LABOR PARTY'S CRITICISM OF
US BASE AGREEMENT

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The British Labor party's parliamentary attacks on present arrangements for the United States' use of its air bases in Britain have laid the groundwork for a possible reopening of this question should Labor return to power in the next general election. In the 20 December debate, Labor's "shadow" defense minister George Brown charged that the British government lacked "anything like sufficient control" over its own destiny. Attacks centered on the disclosure that the British government is not specifically notified each time an American plane armed with nuclear weapons takes off from a British base.

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In the meantime, the Macmillan government itself may move to strengthen its public position on the terms of American use of the bases to deflect further Labor attacks after Parliament reconvenes on 21 January.

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ANNEX

Watch Report 386, 26 December 1957
of the
Intelligence Advisory Committee

Conclusions on Indications of Hostilities

On the basis of findings by its Watch Committee, the Intelligence Advisory Committee concludes that:

- A. No Sino-Soviet bloc country intends to initiate hostilities against the continental US or its possessions in the immediate future.
- B. No Sino-Soviet bloc country intends to initiate hostilities against US forces abroad, US allies or areas peripheral to the orbit in the immediate future.
- C.
 - 1. A deliberate initiation of hostilities in the Middle East is unlikely in the immediate future. However, tensions in the Middle East continue to create possibilities for serious incidents.
 - 2. There is no evidence of Sino-Soviet intention to become militarily involved in the Indonesian situation. However, the Communists are exploiting political instability, growing economic chaos, and prospective food shortages. Developing conditions continue to provide opportunities for a Communist take-over of government on Java.

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